

Message Text

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ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 NEA-05 ADP-00 CU-04 RSR-01 RSC-01 /043 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4055

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: AID REGIONAL TRAINING PROJECT

FOR D.G. MACDONALD FROM AMBASSADOR BUFFUM

REF: STATE 159407

1. WHILE I BELIEVE AID REGIONAL TRAINING PROJECT WILL PROBABLY NOT BE OPERATED AS EFFICIENTLY BY AUB AS AT PRESENT, I CAN APPRECIATE RATIONALE FOR PROPOSING A CHANGE IN OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY AND WE WILL COOPERATE TO MAXIMUM IN SEEKING TO FACILITATE A CHANGEOVER.

2. I ALSO BELIEVE THE PROJECT IS TOO VALUABLE TO PERMIT IT FALTER SHOULD SOME ASPECTS OF NEW PROCEDURES PROVE UNWORKABLE. THEREFORE I PARTICULARLY WELCOME YOUR PROPOSAL TO CONSIDER THIS COMING YEAR AS A TRIAL PERIOD WITH FINAL JUDGEMENT DELAYED UNTIL AUB HAS HAD A CHANCE TO PROVE ITS CAPACITIES. I SUGGEST THIS PERIOD RUN AT LEAST UNTIL BEGINNING OF AUB'S FALL SEMESTER IN OCTOBER 1974. SINCE REAL TEST OF AUB'S PERFORMANCE WILL BE ITS ABILITY TO WORK WITH VARIOUS HOST GOVERNMENTS IN SELECTING NEW STUDENTS, AND GETTING THEM ON BOARD. THIS WORK IS LARGELY COMPLETED FOR 1973. USE OF COMING ANNUAL CYCLE WOULD ALLOW AUB TO WORK THROUGH ENTIRE PROCESS FROM INITIAL CONTACT THROUGH TESTING, SELECTING AND NOMINATING THE STUDENTS TO THEIR ARRIVAL IN BEIRUT. IF YOU AGREE, I SUGGEST

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THIS APPROACH BE REFLECTED IN YOUR LETTER TO DR. KIRKWOOD.

3. I ALSO SUGGEST YOU DELETE OR REWORD PARAGRAPH DEALING WITH AAO LOCAL EMPLOYEES. I DOUBT AID CAN SIMPLY OFFER TO "SHIFT" THESE PEOPLE TO AUB UNLESS THEY WOULD REMAIN ON AID'S PAYROLL AND BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST AUB STAFF. IF YOU ARE SUGGESTING THEY SHOULD BECOME AUB EMPLOYEES I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THEM OR TO AUB. TWO OF THE EMPLOYEES IN QUESTION HAVE 17 YEARS USG SERVICE AND THE OTHER 12. IF AAO OFFICE IS PHASED OUT, THEY WILL CERTAINLY SEEK EMPLOYMENT WITH SOME OTHER US AGENCY TO PROTECT THEIR PAY LEVEL AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS. IN ANY EVENT I PROPOSE AT LEAST MINIMUM AAO STAFF BE MAINTAINED UNTIL WORKABILITY OF NEW PROCEDURES HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT WOULD ALSO SEEM REASONABLE FOR AID TO PAY FOR INCREASED LOCAL STAFF WHICH AUB WILL DEFINITELY NEED.

4. FINALLY, I SUGGEST CARE BE TAKEN IN WAY HOST COUNTRIES AND US OFFICES ARE INFORMED OF CHANGES IN ORDER TO AVOID IMPRESSION WE ARE ABRUPTLY ABANDONING OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD STUDENTS ALREADY SPONSORED FOR TRAINING AND IN THE PROGRAM. FOR FUTURE STUDENTS, OUR ROLE (IF ANY) AND AUB'S ROLE SHOULD BE EXPLAINED IN ADVANCE DURING AAO'S AND AUB REP'S TRIPS THROUGHOUT THE AREA.
BUFFUM

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